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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 18, 2000

SAN DIEGO SECTOR ANNOUNCES BORDER PATROL AGENTS OF THE YEAR RECIPIENTS

San Diego, California: Each year Border Patrol Agents perform countless acts of heroism and community service. In recognition of these achievements, an agent is selected as the Agent of the Year for his/her act of heroism or community service above and beyond the call of duty. This year two agents were selected as the Agent of the Year for 1999. During an award ceremony held on May 5, 2000, Chief Patrol Agent William T. Veal announced the selection of Agents Nicholas J. Coates, Jr., of the El Cajon Station and Agent Jose Acosta of the Brownfield Station as the recipients of the Agent of the Year Award. During the award ceremony, Chief Veal commended both agents for their heroism and swift action. The Chief stated both agents "can truly be proud of their courageous and meritorious life saving efforts." Additionally, Chief Veal stated that the agents' "distinguished performance reflects proudly upon themselves, this Sector and the United States Border Patrol."

Both agents were instrumental in saving the lives of victims in two separate auto accidents. On July 23, 1999, while traveling to visit relatives, Agent Coates witnessed a tragic accident involving a van, a tractor-trailer, and a Greyhound bus. As the first responder to the scene, Coates worked quickly to administer life-saving first aid for several victims on the scene and assisted paramedics once they arrived. He was commended in saving the lives of 67 victims and for selflessly taking time from his personal life to help others in need.

On August 29, 1999, while detailed to the Casa Grande Border Patrol Station, Agent Acosta witnessed a motor vehicle accident. The accident occurred when the vehicle, which was traveling at a high rate of speed, lost control and rolled several times. Agent Acosta and another agent from Casa Grande Station administered first aid to the victims of the accident, including two children. The adult male driver of the rolled over vehicle stated his five-month old baby was ejected from the vehicle. Agent Acosta immediately searched the area and found the infant motionless approximately 40 yards from the vehicle. He performed first aid until the infant regained consciousness.

The other agent summoned for medical airlift, and the infant was treated and transported via helicopter to a trauma center in Tucson. The infant's life was saved as a direct result of Agent Acosta's actions.

Border Patrol Agents perform the undaunted task of protecting our borders on a daily basis. The professionalism and dedicated service to the community and country is exemplified by the countless acts of heroism and bravery performed by Border Patrol Agents.

No further information is available. San Diego Sector related information is available on our website, www.usbpsd.com.